

Design Standards – Core Neighborhoods

These design standards are intended particularly for the core neighborhoods in proximity to Downtown Eau Claire; including, but not limited to the Eastside Hill, Historic Randall Park, Third Ward, North River Fronts, North Side Hill, Mt. Washington and Upper Westside Neighborhoods. The provisions below provide a guide for the Plan Commission, developers, and staff to review new multi-family projects within the neighborhoods listed, above in addition to the standards that are within the existing Multi-family Housing Design Manual. The latitude of acceptable design possibilities is generally broader when a greater variety of housing styles exists in an area. Based on these guidelines, the Plan Commission will make the final determination if the design is appropriate for a particular location and for the particular architecture style of the proposed structure(s). The Plan Commission will review the site plan to determine compliance with the standards.

Guiding Principles

- Densities that vary from the existing housing ensure that infill or new housing complements the neighborhood and does not overpower existing housing structures.
- Housing viewed from the public street or public space includes varying design elements to provide variety in style and appearance.
- Ensure that buildings are compatible with the building height and apparent scale of existing adjacent buildings.
- Emphasize on design ensuring that affordability and sustainability will be integrated in new projects.
- Emphasize architectural massing and materials that provide appealing architectural forms and contribute to the quality of the neighborhood.

Review Guidelines

Building Design

- The elevation of the first floor (the apparent top of the foundation) should be at a height similar to that of neighboring residences.
- The height of the new structure should not be noticeably taller than the existing buildings on the block.
- The massing or size of the front-facing wall of a new structure should not exceed 125% of that of the largest structure on either side of the street within that block.
- The footprint area of the new structure should not exceed 125% of the footprint area of the largest structures on either side of the street within that block.
- Exterior materials should primarily be brick, wood, stucco, or a variety of engineered cement or fiber board.
- Generally, courses of bricks along the foundation extending up two or three feet should be avoided in structures primarily constructed with wood or smart board siding exteriors to avoid a suburban look.

Building Entrance

- The new structure should be designed with a front facing entrance. No building should be allowed more than two entrances on any single façade, except in the case of a row house.

- Main entrances should have a roof covering extending at least three feet from the door. Entrance features may encroach into the front yard setback a maximum of three feet.
- The new structure should be designed with an unenclosed front porch, including steps with overhangs or similar design features for all entrances, not only entrances that face the street.
- Porches should extend along at least 30% of the frontage of the structure when appropriate with the architecture style.
- Porches should not be open between the ground and porch floor. Either lattice should be installed or the porch should be constructed with a masonry or wood front.

Roof Design

- Gable roofs should be +/- 6:12 pitch or steeper and hip roofs should be +/- 4:12 or steeper. This provision should not be construed to mean that other roof styles are not permitted so long as the roof pitch is appropriate for the architectural style of the building. Flat roofs should be minimized or avoided.
- Roof overhangs/eaves should extend from the wall a minimum of 18 inches on all elevations except for front porches.
- Buildings that are single story should incorporate roof designs of higher eaves and steeper pitches to add visual height to the structure.
- Longer rooflines (35' to 40' or longer) should incorporate design features such as gables, dormers, and parapets to provide variety and character to the structure. Other decorative features such as brackets, bargeboards, lintels, roof returns, and other decorative moldings below the eave-line are encouraged.

Window Design

- Windows should generally have a more vertical configuration and be of double hung style.
- At least 20% of the front-facing façade of a structure should consist of windows. Side and rear-facing facades should include at least 10% window area. Windows, doors, and corners should include trim at least four inches in width with a contrasting color from the walls in order to add detail and character.
- Shutters can complement the design of a building and should be considered when appropriate, but should correspond appropriately to the height and width of the windows.

Landscaping and Open Space

- Landscaping and open space should be important design element for new structures. A mix of deciduous and evergreen plantings should be incorporated into the landscape plan. Plantings should include both those along the foundation of the structure and within the front and side yard areas. Variation in height of the plantings is also necessary.
- Landscaping should be used to screen features such as egress windows, mechanical equipment, parking and trash storage.

Solar Consideration

- Solar access should be a consideration for both the proposed building and neighboring building. Structures should contemplate solar installation and solar energy utilization for on-site and solar installation for neighboring.
- Encourage for electric service supplied for hybrid and electric vehicles.

Garage(s)

- Vehicular access should be from the rear if an alley is present. If no alley is present, a garage facing a street should:
 - Have similar exterior building materials and similar roof pitch as the principal building
 - Front wall set back a minimum of five feet from the front elevation of the principal building
 - Include windows of similar design as in the principal building
 - Provide separate overhead doors for each parking stall
 - Massing of the detached garage should not exceed 50% of the principal building